

SPECIFICATION

Amend page 1, line 1 by inserting the following immediately under the title:

Cross Reference to Related Applications

This application is the national phase of international application PCT/IB04/003310, filed October 11, 2004, which claims the benefit of United States Provisional Patent application 60/513724, filed October 23, 2003, hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

Amend page 4 between lines 10 and 11 by inserting the following paragraph:

Another aspect of the present invention includes a kit comprising, in at least one container, a composition for treating and preventing periodontal disease in companion animals comprising an effective amount of at least one live or inactivated isolated pigmented anaerobic bacteria as described herein, e.g., as described in any of the claims 1 through 11, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier; wherein the kit further comprises a set of printed instructions indicating that the kit is useful for treating or preventing periodontal disease in companion animals. Another aspect is where the kit just discussed further comprises a means for dispensing said composition.

Amend page 4 between lines 23 and 24 by inserting the following paragraph:

Another aspect of the present invention includes a kit comprising in at least one container an isolated DNA molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence of at least about 15 contiguous nucleotides selected from any of SEQ ID NOS: 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13, which hybridizes under highly stringent conditions to the complement of any of the nucleotide sequences depicted in SEQ ID NOS: 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13, and a second isolated DNA molecule comprising in a second container an isolated DNA molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence of at least about 15 contiguous nucleotides selected from the complement of any of the nucleotide sequences depicted in SEQ ID NOS: 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13 which hybridizes under highly stringent conditions to any of the nucleotide sequences depicted in SEQ ID NOS: 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13, wherein the kit further comprises a set of instructions indicating that the kit is useful for the detection of *Bacteroides*, *Porphyromonas*, or *Tannerella* spp.

Another aspect of the present invention includes a hybridization kit comprising in at least one container an isolated DNA molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence of at least about 15 contiguous nucleotides selected from any of SEQ ID NOS: 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13, or its complement, wherein the hybridization is specific to *Bacteroides*, *Porphyromonas*, or *Tannerella* spp. and wherein the kit further comprises a set of instructions indicating that the kit is useful for the detection of *Bacteroides*,

Porphyromonas, or *Tannerella* spp. This kit also includes an invention wherein the hybridization is performed under highly stringent conditions.